

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Soviet Perceptions of the US

FROM: Fritz W. Ermarth
NIO/USSR-EE

EXTENSION

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DATE 27 February 1984

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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #01337-84
27 February 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Vice Chairmen, National Intelligence Council
Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: Fritz W. Ermarth
National Intelligence Officer for USSR-EE

SUBJECT: Soviet Perceptions of the US

1. From the moment I came on board I've been making the argument, in memos and conversations with policymakers, that beneath the Politburo leadership transition, as important as that is, there is a generational transition taking place of even greater and longer-term importance to us. As you reenter the Washington scene, you will find a lot of attention being paid to near-term questions: Can the Chernenko leadership make decisions? Will it soften the line toward the US? Can we do business with Chernenko? Will he be interested in a summit? The answer to all these questions is likely to be "yes," except perhaps for the last one, where it's a toss up. This is all very tantalizing to those who, for different reasons, want to get an atmosphere of dialogue restored to US-Soviet relations and some movement in arms control negotiations.

2. Whether, when and how we play on these immediate possibilities must be decided, however, in the light of the larger and longer-term issue as well: How do we want to shape the way the new generation of Soviet leaders -- the Gorbachyovs, the Romanovs, the Ligachyovs, and their like throughout the system -- perceive the United States as a competitor in world affairs? Getting the Soviets "back to the bargaining table," successfully "restoring the dialogue," or even seeing a sharp subsidence of hostile Soviet propaganda need not necessarily mean that we've made our point or conveyed the message we want them to get.

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3. For many months, the Soviet foreign affairs and security apparatus has been engaged in a debate about the nature, the seriousness, and the durability of the American international challenge under the current Administration. I was not able to track this debate carefully in my previous job and have not been here long enough to be on top of it. I am concerned to find rather little analysis of it in the community, although its substance and importance are obvious. As a result, I am at the moment unsure as to who lines up on what arguments inside the USSR. But the most important arguments have been clear enough.

4. The Soviets easily came to the conclusion that the Reagan Administration represents a new peak of challenge to their interests and expectations. Their milder references liken it to the Truman Administration which launched the Cold War. Some of their harsher characterizations, which continue after the supposed softening of Soviet rhetoric around the turn of the year, liken the Administration to Hitler Germany (see Attachment). They can dial the hostility level up and down, depending on their external and, to some extent, internal tactical purposes. In any case, they recognize that the US challenge is a basic one in that it seeks to contain Soviet power and call its legitimacy into question.

5. More interesting, however, are the questions that usually follow these fulminations: How long is this new American phenomenon going to last? Are the political roots of this new American competitiveness deep enough to make it durable. Or is this a quickly passing phenomenon? Sometimes they put it this way: Was detente the transient, aberrant phase in recent US-Soviet relations, or does it remain the main "objective" tendency, to which things will return when this Administration is turned out or becomes "realistic"?

6. As time has passed, there has been a greater Soviet willingness to recognize that the Reagan challenge will be deep and lasting. Yet the other side of the argument continues to be made: The US cannot reverse the tide of history. The USSR is much stronger today than in the past. The peace movement obstructs the US. Economic troubles impede the restoration of American strategic power.

7. On the eve of Andropov's death, Kommunist (a party journal directed mainly at internal audiences) went to press with the attached editorial. It is worth your scanning for the flavor of the recent Soviet discussion. It cuts the baby right down the middle:

"International relations have entered a period of increasing danger inflicted on the people by the plans and actions of U.S. and NATO reactionary imperialist circles. There should be no illusions as to the seriousness of the situation: the factors determining it have deep socioeconomic roots which, by virtue of the specific characteristics of American political life, can be expected to be

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long-term.* At the same time, there are also no grounds for exaggerating the possibilities imperialism to implement its criminal plans, and for groundlessly ascribing to it the ability of unilaterally dictating the general direction of world events. In other words, it is not necessary to excessively dramatize the existing situation.

Imperialism has not seized and, even strained all of its forces, is no longer able to seize the historical initiative."

* ...i.e., Reagan will be reelected

In other words, the political forces enshrined in the current Administration will persist; but its policies will fail. The US challenge is of long-term character, but it will fall short of attaining its strategic aims, and it can be dealt with in terms of the old combination of "soft line" (detente) and "hard line" (military build-up, third world penetration) strategies.

The good news, from our point of view, is that we have got their attention. The bad news is that we haven't yet persuaded them that they will have to moderate their long-term goals and policies to manage their relationship with us.

8. A major irony here is that the policy line most frequently attributed to Chernenko, because of his past support for Brezhnev, is taken to be positive and conciliatory from our point of view. In the context of the real debate over perceptions and consequent policies going on in the USSR, the likely implication is almost the reverse. To the extent Chernenko continues to adhere to Brezhnevism, he is saying: "Don't worry, comrades. Reagan is worse than we've been used to lately. But when you look at the objective factors -- political strength, psychological staying power, alliance cohesion, economics -- we can deal with his Administration with the same detente strategy we used against his predecessors. It will just take more patience."

9. The alternative point of view, which is detectable in statements from senior military figures like Ogarkov, says that the old combination won't work. It clearly implies that the Soviet Union will have to increase its defense effort. It leaves open the critical question as to whether the USSR should be more cautious to avert the risk of confrontation with the US, or more bold to discredit US policies.

10. A further irony here is that it is the perceptions of the most "hawkish" parties to the argument that we want to prove valid, so valid in fact that they lead ultimately to a "dovish" policy prescription for the long term, namely, a sustained moderation of Soviet behavior in the world. We do not want the prevailing perception of the new leadership generation to be that the US can be easily deflected from serious competitive policies toward the USSR by clever diplomatic tactics.

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11. There is much argument among US analysts about the outlook of the new generation of Soviet leaders. While they are admittedly hard to document, I am convinced we are dealing with a very worrisome combination of attitudes. The fundamental problem for us is that these people have grown up on the idea that the sustained retreat of American power in world affairs and the sustained advance of Soviet power are the natural, if not automatic, trend of history. (Thus, we frequently see the terms "historical initiative," "reversal of history" in the current Soviet commentaries). They have worked to support these trends and have come to expect them to be fulfilled. They have not been prepared to consider fundamental alternatives to the policies of the post-war era. Despite the weaknesses of Soviet society, they have believed the USSR can advance its power in the world because its leaders are serious about political and strategic struggle and, on the whole, Western leaders are not.

12. Lately the possibility of different perspectives has intruded, however. First, the Leninist outlook has always been sensitive to the possibility that "imperialism," after a period of retreat leading to the brink of irreversible defeat, would "lash out" desperately, producing a crisis for which the USSR must be prepared and which deft diplomacy must try to avert. This theme has become more audible in Soviet discourse in recent years. For example, the editor of the party journal cited above, in a recent interview: "Capitalism which is being engulfed in the abyss of its own general crisis, is becoming particularly dangerous.... Capitalism, as it slips away ..., is prepared to carry away with it every living thing on the earth."

13. Second, as is evidenced by the increased frequency of Soviet assertions about the "irreversibility of historic trends," the Soviets have had to think seriously for the first time since the early 1960s about the possibility that the US could be successful in turning long-term strategic trends against the USSR. Because of Soviet socio-economic weaknesses, these new adverse trends might become irreversible. The logic of the situation would dictate consideration of major policy departures to avert this: 1) either sharp moderation of Soviet goals in the world to mute the competition in the long term, or 2) sharp escalation of the contest to "nip in the bud" US competitiveness before it recovers strategic strength. Herb Meyer has speculated about the second possibility. It is clearly the greater danger to us, and cannot be ruled out despite evidence (analyzed recently by Grey Hodnett) showing that the Soviets do not now expect a major confrontation with the US. Thus, the Soviets have not yet decided on a preemptive strategic showdown. At the same time, the Soviets have clearly not yet come to any strategic decision to moderate their goals in the world.

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14. This is why the fundamental task of shaping Soviet leadership perceptions remains so important even in the short term. There are opportunities and positive prospects in "restoring the dialogue" in US-Soviet relations -- including a summit -- especially if it is used to press strategic and historic arguments, and to convince Soviet leaders of our seriousness in defending security interests. There is also the danger in a very political year that we shall act in such a way as to convince new Soviet leaders that the current Administration and the US as a whole can be dealt with just as before, with sweet-talk on bilateral relations and arms control, even as Soviet military programs and pressures on our regional security interests continue.

15. Key figures in the Administration are alert to this danger, as well as to the political opportunities of near-term improvements in US-Soviet relations. The President reportedly feels that the US performance on defense budgets, INF, Grenada, etc. has convincingly asserted US resolve as a competitor. Yet the Soviets see, and say that they see, a more mixed picture: The defense budget is threatened by the deficits. The INF story is far from over. Lebanon is not, on balance, a ringing statement of US resolve to use force.

16. This reasoning leads me to conclude:

- Soviet perceptions of the US and our need to shape them should be themes stressed by you in the policy arena;
- We need to do more analysis on this throughout the analytic staffs;
- We must do a SNIE on the subject in the next three months.

(for) Fritz W. Ermarth

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ANNEX'UNPRECEDENTED ACUTENESS' OF WORLD SCENE VIEWEDAU130900 Moscow KOMMUNIST in Russian No 2 (Signed to Press 23 Jan 84) pp 4-15 --
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[Editorial: "The World at a Responsible Crossroads"]

[Text] Today the problem of problems has arisen before the world's peoples with unprecedented acuteness -- the problem of defending with every available means at their disposal mankind's right to life and to existence itself. Such is the critical crossroads to which the aggressive forces of a dying social system -- capitalism -- have brought the world community of nations with their irresponsible actions. Never before have such huge material and human resources been mobilized in preparation for war, as today, and never before has such frankly misanthropic propaganda been conducted as that now being developed by these forces, headed by the U.S. reactionary ruling clique. In an era when human genius is opening up new prospects of unlimited progress to present and future generations, by achieving a grandiose scientific-technical breakthrough into the future, monopolistic capital, blinded by class hatred of everything that personifies the future, shows readiness to utilize the latest achievements of reason in the name of saving its power and its privileges and to expose human civilization itself to mortal risk. During its millennia of history, mankind really has not encountered a more threatening situation.

The events of recent months have thrown the responsibility of the present situation into particularly sharp relief. The essence of these events lies in the attempt of imperialist reactionaries to move from feverish preparation for social revanche to an offensive against the positions of contemporary revolutionary forces, and primarily against real socialism and its standard bearer -- the Soviet Union. Their immediate aim is to gain military superiority over the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact countries, to force them to make political concessions, and then to ensure complete world dominion for themselves, even using nuclear weapons if necessary. To do this, the United States has started a new spiral in the arms race, having practically begun to build up its nuclear arsenal on an unprecedented scale, and is carrying out bandit-like attacks on small states reminiscent of leaders of Hitler's Reich.

Today, the action of militarist circles most dangerous for the cause of peace is the deployment of new American nuclear missiles in the countries of Western Europe. It is dangerous primarily because it creates a tense situation in the neuralgic center of the contemporary system of international relations, and because it expresses a striving to establish diktat and blackmail as the norms of international conduct, placing the world on the brink of nuclear conflict.

Calculations that enemies of social progress will successfully reverse the course of history are unrealizable but they are fraught with extreme danger for the future of all mankind. In this situation, the sole response to the challenge thrown down by the forces of the old world can only be resolute warning -- in word and deed -- from the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community that all attempts to break the military-strategic balance that serves the security of peoples will be followed by the appropriate response, and that, of the United States unleashes a nuclear conflict it will not succeed in warding off a crushing counterstrike from its house; and also an appeal to the reason of responsible statesmen to make rational decisions, so as to save mankind from the misfortunes that threaten it, and a call for the unity of efforts of all peoples and of all inhabitants of this planet in the struggle for their own existence. It is precisely this approach that permeates the documents of universal political significance -- the statements by Comrade Yu.V. Andropov, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, of 28 September and 24 November 1983.

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They contained a profound and principled evaluation of the present international situation and the formulated tasks emanating from this situation, and once again emphasize the indestructible will of the Soviet Union for peace, together with its resolve to do everything possible to prevent imperialism from casting mankind into the abyss of nuclear catastrophe.

States and peoples are warned in the most resolute way of the complexity of the existing situation. They have been given a clear opportunity to convince themselves that, by showing genuinely Leninist self-control, steadfastness, and a principled attitude the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet Government are consistently implementing the policy of preserving peace and strengthening international security. The intrigues of imperialism are opposed by the high vigilance and strengthening of defense capacity of the USSR and other fraternal countries. "We will also henceforth do everything necessary," -- it was pointed out at the June (1983) CPSU Central Committee Plenum -- "to ensure the security of our country and of our friends and allies, and we will increase the military might of the Soviet Armed Forces -- a powerful factor in containing the aggressive aspirations of imperialist reactionaries."

Characterizing the motivating forces of the foreign policy of imperialism, V.I. Lenin pointed out the existence of the "military party" in capitalist countries, which adheres to the principle: "Force must be used immediately, without concern for the consequences" (Complete Collected Works, Vol 36, p 333). The assumption of power in the United States, the most powerful capitalist power of the contemporary period, by representatives of the reactionary wing of the monopolistic bourgeoisie -- the "party" of barefaced militarists -- lies at the root of that danger to the cause of peace which has been created today. It seems to its leaders, in the persons of President Reagan and his entourage, that they already or soon will possess the force enabling them to sharply turn the course of world events in their favor. Reveling in the delusion that the American military machine is omnipotent, and ignoring the realities of our era, they have begun a campaign to assert the absolute world power of monopolistic capital, inflaming the international situation to the extreme. The nuclear threat has today assumed a qualitatively new nature as a result of their actions.

The gigantic U.S. military appropriations (approximately \$640 billion over the last 3 years, \$280 billion in the current financial year, and the prospect of a 12-14 percent annual increase) are made with an obvious and increasing preponderance in favor of means for the so-called "disarming" or "decapitating" strike on the centers and communication lines of the Soviet side. In other words, the question is one of an attempt to adapt the Hitlerite idea of a "blitzkrieg" to conditions of the nuclear era. Correspondingly, priority is given to the warhead delivery systems that provide the maximum accuracy in homing in on a target and are designed for minimum flight time to the target. Today, according to Pentagon calculations, the Pershing II is just such a weapon -- the latest intermediate-range ballistic missile. They are striving to deploy them as close as possible to the planned targets, concentrating superior power in decisive directions.

The danger of a nuclear conflagration increases as the U.S. Administration irresponsibly pushes the arms race beyond the point where stopping it would be much more difficult than now. It is also increasing as a direct consequence of the inflaming mass chauvinistic psychosis in America, including the frenzied propaganda of the "crusade for democracy" against socialism as a social system.

In the general situation of nervousness and uneasy excitement created by the policy of the Reagan administration, the installation in Europe of new American missiles is a step of a principled nature and world-wide importance, which is hostile to the cause of peace.

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Undermining the existing level of military equilibrium on the continent, this step creates a new situation for every European state, including the U.S. allies, and new, threatening dangers for the countries of the Near and Middle East and for many African states which are within the range of these nuclear weapons, and it thereby places not only the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole but also the entire world before the accomplished fact.

Life has most convincingly confirmed that the delivery of Pershings and cruise missiles across the ocean is not a reaction to some kind of concern supposedly existing in the West regarding the present correlation of forces in Europe, which does not in fact cause alarm in view of its balanced nature, but rather the implementation of an action already planned long ago by the U.S. leaders, and the statements of other NATO countries who act together with them. The statements by highly placed representatives of that military bloc also attest to this. Thus, American General B. Rogers, supreme commander of the NATO armed forces in Europe, stated as early as March 1983: "The majority of people suppose that we are modernizing our weapons because of the SS-20 missiles. We would have modernized them even if there were no SS-20 missiles." It could not be more clearly put.

Disregarding both the will of the European peoples and the realities of the nuclear age, the American militarists are taking up their positions on foreign soil with first strike weapons ready for use in a situation where some conflict or other is exacerbated, the outbreak of which is more likely the more unpredictable the adventurist policy of the present American leaders becomes.

Thus, irrespective of the good will of those European states that are sincerely interested in strengthening peace on the continent and in developing relations here of equal and mutually advantageous cooperation, the international climate in Europe has sharply deteriorated. It is primarily military detente that is blocked -- the key to all further development of positive general European processes. But this is not the only thing involved in this connection. In all spheres of mutual relations between the states which, in one way or another, act in solidarity with Washington's course, and the Warsaw Pact countries, a cold spell has inevitably set in, the degree of trust has lessened, and possibilities of various contacts have narrowed. Damage is also being inflicted upon the level of achieved security, which is highly valued by people in both the East and the West of the continent.

In this light, the arguments of the political figures in the United States and other NATO countries sound false when they reiterated these days that the possibilities for more stable and long-term development of relations with socialist states are supposedly broadening. Everything is the other way round. Reasoning about arranging fruitful political dialogue with the USSR and other countries of the socialist community, multilateral cooperation, and parallel deployment of American missiles, cannot be taken any other way than as an attempt, on the one hand, to continue by new means the old policy of the virtual unilateral nuclear disarmament of the world of real socialism and, on the other, to appease the West European public with wittingly unrealizable promises that do not contain any new ideas or constructive proposals indicating readiness to realistically appraise the situation.

Following the lead of Washington, the governments that agreed to the deployment of missiles in their countries also continue to adopt unrealistic positions. To all appearances, the time has come to speak firmly and without any reserve about the serious responsibility facing the peoples, which the West European advocates of recklessly turning these countries into hostage of the American adventurists for political reasons, are taking upon themselves. All these statesmen who -- in the words of N. Kinnock, leader of the Labor Party of Great Britain -- have stuck "a knife in the back of Soviet-American negotiations on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe," are basically united by unquestioningly following the Reagan line in world affairs, and by unilaterally orienting themselves towards the infamous "Western solidarity."

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"Blinded by their own fear," the journal LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE writes of them, "paralyzed by their unwillingness to admit their guilt, and stupefied by propaganda that has lavished empty guarantees, these people have recognized and continue to recognize with unwavering faith the changing 'military doctrines' which are fashionable in Washington."

There is a considerable amount of truth in the words of the French journal, but it is far from the whole truth. It is not transient emotions and erroneous evaluations of the essence of the existing international situation that represent the fundamental reason for the alignment of many politicians in the capitalist world with Washington, but their general class approach to the fundamental trends of world development in our epoch. It is no accident that parallels with events of the 1930's arise in appraisals of the current policies of leading bourgeois states of the contemporary period. Was it not then too that the world witnessed the active complicity, against fundamental national interests, of the leaders of the largest capitalist countries with the leaders of the Nazi Reich which had begun a campaign to gain world domination? Mankind will never forget what a crushing failure the policy of so-called "appeasement" of the aggressor turned out to be for its initiator -- the Chamberlains, the Daladiers, and others with them -- and what bloody and tragic fruits it bore for the peoples.

But monopolistic capital is incorrigible. In the new historic situation and even during a period as critical for the earth's future as the present one, money magnates and their political emissaries are making the task of rallying their forces into a united antisocialist and antiprogressive alliance their priority-one task. Lenin's characterization of this alliance, given 6 and a 1/2 decades ago, retains its full significance: "...The alliance of imperialists of all countries is a natural and inevitable alliance for the defense of capital, which knows no motherland; many of the most important and greatest episodes in world history have proved that capital places protection of its alliance of the world's capitalists against the working people above the interests of the motherland, the people, and anything else it chooses..." (Complete Collected Works, Vol 36, pp. 328-329).

Events of recent months demonstrate that, blinded by their mercenary class interests, the leaders of monopolistic capital in the NATO countries are prepared to gamble on the main interests common to all mankind, not to mention the accepted norms of international conduct, that have been formed on the basis of laborious and age-long experience and have served to help regulate relations between states to avoid a renaissance of the laws of the jungle. Hence, it is not this that concerns those who have embarked on the road of unquestioningly following the line laid down in world affairs by the most aggressive and adventurist circles of American imperialism and who assert that the Western countries have no other alternative than to rely on the United States to guarantee the existing social order.

Eulogies to "Western solidarity" sound in the capitals of NATO when the Reagan administration seems to be demonstrating to the world, deliberately and with a persistence worthy of the best application, that international norms exist for it only when they are convenient to Washington, that a power in which irresponsible militarism is the boss clearly places its imperial ambitions and hegemonist aspirations above international law and interests common to all mankind, and that it is prepared to resort at any moment to methods of force, threats, provocations, and blackmail. Are those who cling to the coattails of Reagan's policy aware of the ability of leaders beyond the ocean to turn the sharp edge of this policy against them too, as has already happened more than in the past, as soon as this, in the ideas of the White House, corresponds to American interests?

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By not wishing to prevent the deployment of American first-strike nuclear weapons in Western Europe, the United States' NATO allies have basically jeopardized their own security. This applies primarily to the Governments of the FRG, the UK, and Italy, who could not help but know that in permitting the placement on their territories of weapons, the launching of which will be decided on the other side of the ocean, they are turning their countries into targets for immediate counterstrike. As a result, the FRG and Italy are depriving themselves of the advantage they had by virtue of the USSR's obligation not to use nuclear weapons against states that do not possess nuclear weapons themselves and which do not have such weapons on their territories. As far as the UK is concerned, its so-called "national" nuclear forces lose all their exclusively defensive and "containing" significance -- as it is usually called in the West -- for from now on it will not be up to London whether a nuclear war begins from British soil or not. The question of responsibility also applies to the governments of those North Atlantic alliance member-states that, while not accepting missiles on their territory, support the U.S. position and have thereby contributed to the creation once more of a dangerous situation in Europe.

The actions of the FRG ruling circles deserve particular attention. It is they who gave their consent to deploying on West German soil Pershing II missiles aimed at their neighbors, who not so long ago were victims of the bloody Hitlerite aggression. By their active participation in preparing and implementing the missile plan, they have contradicted the spirit and letter of the Eastern agreements that have regulated relations between the FRG and the socialist countries of Europe, and have gambled with the vitally important interests of the country. They have chosen participation in the bellicose plans of Washington in preference to fulfilling their historical obligations never again to allow war to emanate from German soil.

The deployment of American missiles also signifies the further subordination of the Western allies to the United States. Washington, as statements of its representatives testify, intends to continue to keep any and all political contacts of other NATO members with the Soviet Union and countries of the socialist community under absolute control, and to demand agreement with it on any planned moves. There is no place for allies with equal rights in the "American-style world," as it is conceived by the White House -- there, only vassals who cannot permit their opinions to differ with those in the American capital are acknowledged.

Thus, a new situation is taking shape in Western Europe, which the USSR and other states of the socialist community must take into account in their policy.

② International relations have entered a period of increasing dangers which are brought to peoples by the plans and actions of U.S. and NATO reactionary imperialist circles. There should be no illusions as to the seriousness of the situation: the factors determining it have deep socioeconomic roots which, by virtue of the specific characteristics of American political life, can be expected to be long-term. At the same time, there is also no grounds for exaggerating the possibilities imperialism has of implementing its criminal plans, and for groundlessly ascribing to it the ability of sovereignly dictating the general direction of world events. In other words, it is not necessary to excessively dramatize the existing situation.

Imperialism has not ^{seize} intercepted and, even straining all of its forces, is no longer able to intercept historical initiative.

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The main and decisive obstacle to this is the power of real socialism, and the activity of the international communist and workers movement and of all liberation and democratic movements of the contemporary period. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries will also henceforth continue to develop according to their own laws, which are called into being by objective and historical processes. Despite all its efforts, imperialism did not succeed in destroying socialism when the land of the soviets was the only one of its kind in the world. This is all the more unrealizable in our period of intensively strengthening the world positions of socialism.

The turn toward acute aggravation of international tension was not anything unexpected for the world of socialism and for all progressive forces of the contemporary period. The Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community have attentively followed the growth of aggressive trends in the policy of imperialism, and have pointed out in good time the dangers created by the plans and actions of U.S. and NATO militarist circles. A realistic and comprehensively substantiated program for overcoming negative phenomena in the development of world events was put forward, as is well known, at the Prague conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact states and then confirmed at the Moscow meeting of party and state leaders of seven socialist countries. The fraternal states and parties have repeatedly appealed to the parliaments, and political and social organizations of other countries of the world to take joint actions with the aim of finding the best ways to halt the arms race and to normalize the international situation. The tireless foreign political activity of the Soviet state, and the numerous peace-loving initiatives contained in the speeches of Comrade Yu.V. Andropov have continued to create real opportunities to resolve the complex problems hindering the return of relations between the peoples to the path of normal development.

Thus, all possible measures have been adopted to prevent the situation being further exacerbated. At the same time, the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community were also prepared for a different turn of events, taking the actions of U.S. and NATO militarist forces into account. The aggressive actions of reactionary imperialist circles should not take them unawares and, as events have shown, did not take them unawares. The situation taking shape in the international arena has not been under the control of the adventurist elements in the camp of capitalist politicians for one single moment.

Despite the growing aggressiveness of imperialism and the recklessness of its actions, the conclusion of the CPSU and the world communist and workers movement, which is based on comprehensive analysis of the state of affairs in the world, on the absence of the fatal inevitability of war also retains its force. There is still a real possibility of overcoming the present difficult moment in the development of international relations, and of returning to detente as the trend in interstate contacts which best corresponds to the demands of the contemporary segment of history. No programs to re-arm imperialism can change the fundamental substance of our era as the era of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale. There is not and there cannot be any doubt that sooner or later the U.S. ruling cliques will have to reckon with the growing displeasure and opposition its policy is encountering throughout the world.

Already at the present stage, the hard course of arming in world affairs adopted by the Reagan administration and its NATO like-minded followers is beginning to misfire more and more. As the press in the United States and other Western countries openly admits, the deployment in Europe of new intermediate-range nuclear systems, which has been imposed on its allies, is not bringing speedy dividends,

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The beginning of their deployment did not cause confusion or perturbation in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, but instead -- according to observers' reports -- it sowed doubts in Washington on the practicability of the course taken to rapidly gain a unilateral military advantage over the USSR. The countries of the socialist community unambiguously demonstrated that they have strong nerves and real possibilities to influence the sociopolitical atmosphere in Europe created by the actions of the U.S. and NATO. Briefly, the hegemonist ways of the White House have not produced the expected result. On the contrary, they have drawn the United States "into serious trouble throughout the world," as THE WASHINGTON POST remarked.

As a result of the growing lack of confidence in the future, and of fear of the possibility of a nuclear conflict, both the U.S. foreign political course and the concept of "Atlantic solidarity," which is the basis of the North Atlantic alliance, are becoming the object of sharp social criticism from various social strata and groups. Even circles which showed until recently, one could say, punctilious loyalty to NATO, are openly posing the question: What does this organization primarily serve -- the defense of West European interests or the American policy of establishing world domination?

In the existing situation of anxiety and lack of confidence in the future, the profoundly meaningful fact that, despite the existence on the continent of colossal stocks of the most up-to-date weaponry, and differences in the domestic and foreign policies of states belonging to opposing social systems, peace has already been maintained in Europe for almost 4 decades, cannot but occur to broad circles of the European public. Is the main credit for this due to the infamous "policy of containment," declared to be the cornerstone of NATO doctrine and serving today as the only ground for delivering the Pershing and cruise missiles to European soil, which are capable of turning this earth into radioactive ruins in one hour? Or is the prolonged peace in Europe a political achievement primarily of the Europeans themselves, who have learned, especially by the painful experience of the two world wars, to live in peace and to cooperate with one another? It is no accident that these questions are the topic of many political discussions developing today on the continent.

Europe in our time is a truly complicated and contradictory complex in political, military, economic, and ideological respects, made up of capitalist and socialist states. However, the European peoples, despite all the differences between them in social systems or in the way of life, also have something in common which is rooted in the very fact of their being neighbors for many centuries, in the mutual interweaving of their historical fate, and in the mutual influence of their cultures. Over the course of many centuries, they have been in the vanguard of sociopolitical and cultural progress of the whole of mankind, and as a result of this they have formed a more or less common mentality which now hinders the attempts to arbitrarily set some European peoples against others, which fact, incidentally, U.S. ruling circles do not wish to understand since they themselves have traversed a considerably shorter and in many ways different path of development. It is worthy to note that even in our complex times, states belonging to two opposing systems cooperate more closely in Europe than can be observed in other regions of the planet.

The present decisive crossroads in the development of the world situation, and the catastrophic consequences with which pursuance of the path begun by the deployment in Europe of American intermediate-range nuclear systems is fraught, clearly pose to every participant in international life the question that is fundamental in the existing situation: Will he deepen the danger of war by his actions or contribute to normalizing the situation by supporting the method of honest and equal negotiations, without pressure and diktat, as the only method corresponding to the realities of the nuclear era?

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It is clear to every sane person, and to all people concerned about the fate of the planet, that today the main thing is not to allow the European Continent to be definitively pushed off the road outlined at the All-European Conference on Security and Cooperation into the swampy marsh of instability and unpredictability, and of further aggravation of nuclear confrontation and political complications. The time demands new impulses and repeated increased efforts in order to create a moral-psychological atmosphere in which unleashing a nuclear war would become simply impossible.

In this connection, the problem which acquires the greatest significance is that of restoring and strengthening trust between states, which can and must be based on agreements proceeding from the principle of parity and equal security, and taking into account the necessity to maintain military-strategic balance. It is obvious that there must be the corresponding political will to achieve these agreements, and firm adherence of the participating sides to their principles for their strict implementation. The broad and constructive program of measures proposed by the Soviet Union at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence-Building Measures and Security and Disarmament in Europe, which opened on 17 January, is an example of the responsible approach of our country to the most important problems of the contemporary international situation, and proceeds from concrete conditions which have developed on the continent as a result of the actions of the U.S. and NATO military, and clearly demonstrates the firm will of the land of the soviets to continue its tireless struggle for normalizing the situation in the world, and for wrecking the aggressive preparations of the imperialist reactionaries.

How long can the present situation of intensifying military confrontation continue in the absence of the so necessary negotiations on limiting and reducing weapons, and primarily nuclear weapons? This depends completely on the American side and the other NATO members. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, its approach to problems of the existing international situation is exhaustively and fully set out in the statements of Comrade Yu.V. Andropov, which outline the program of struggle for the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems for the future. "The Soviet Union" -- it is emphasized in the statement of 24 November 1983 -- "states in a completely definite and firm manner that it remains loyal to the principled course of halting the arms race, and primarily the nuclear arms race, of reducing and, ultimately, of completely eliminating the threat of nuclear war. It will also further exert every effort to achieve these noble aims."

The USSR is doing and intends to continue to do everything it can to stop the dangerous sliding toward nuclear catastrophe, and to preserve peace for present and future generations. The Soviet Union once again states that it is striving toward friendship and mutual understanding with all peoples, and toward good-neighborliness with all states including the United States. It imposes its world outlook upon no one, and promotes the view that ideological differences should not be carried over to interstate relations. Even at this troubled time for mankind and for the entire world, the Soviet state still adheres to a course of constructively resolving the problems of European and international security, lessening tension, and lowering the levels of military confrontation. In accordance with the message of the USSR Supreme Soviet, contained in its resolution "On the International Situation and the Foreign Policy of the Soviet State" of 29 December 1983, the government of our country continues to follow the policy aimed at safeguarding the security of the homeland of the October Revolution and of its allies, and of implementing those steps, which, taking account of the existing circumstances, would lead to an improvement in the international situation.

The statements and other speeches of Comrade Yu.V. Andropov during the past period, which have outlined the main directions of the USSR's struggle to eliminate the nuclear threat and mapped out reliable guidelines for strengthening international security, fully retain their effective force.

[Annex continues on back pages of report]